



**RELEASE:** IMMEDIATE

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## **Emergency Service Provides Access to Grocery Stores *Town's Only Grocery Store Closed on October 31, 2005***

**RICHMOND, Va., November 15, 2005**— The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) has facilitated the extension of bus service for residents in Crewe, VA to provide access to grocery stores, now that the town's only grocery store has closed.

The "Crewe/Burkeville Express" will begin operations today. It will provide access to a store located approximately six miles away in Burkeville, VA and to grocery stores in Blackstone, VA that are approximately 11 miles away.

"DRPT welcomes this opportunity to provide access to critical services," said Director Karen Rae. "This unfortunate situation emphasizes the importance of public transportation in our rural areas. Without transportation choices, many people would be unable to attain basic needs like groceries on their own. Public transportation connects communities and helps people achieve independence."

Fares will be \$0.50 and service will be provided using a Blackstone Area Bus Service 15-passenger, wheelchair equipped van. On November 7, 2005, DRPT approved a demonstration grant request in the amount of \$5,700 for the Town of Blackstone, which will fund this service through June 30, 2006.

Blackstone Town Manager Larry Palmore said, "This is a win-win situation for everyone. Before we started bus service in Blackstone, you would see elderly people pushing grocery carts down the street to get to the grocery store or paying as much as \$75 for a taxi ride. We don't want to see that type of situation in Crewe. We know that people need access, and this is the only way to provide it."

### **About DRPT**

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) facilitates the movement of people and goods throughout Virginia. DRPT operates through three main areas of activity- rail, public transportation and commuter services- that promote congestion relief, economic development and mobility. We help people and businesses find the smartest distance between two points. Visit us at [www.drpt.virginia.gov](http://www.drpt.virginia.gov).

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